



Patent
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11w 2614

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

Tomoyuki Okada et al.

Serial No.: 10/525,788

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For: RECORDING MEDIUM, PLAYBACK
DEVICE, PROGRAM, PLAYBACK
METHOD, AND RECORDING
METHOD

Patent Examiner:

Group Art Unit: 2614

March 23, 2006

Costa Mesa, California 92626

PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

In accordance with MPEP Section 708.02(viii), applicant hereby requests that the above-identified application be made special, and a fee required in accordance with 37 C.F.R. Section 1.17(i) is submitted herewith.

It is believed that the attached Preliminary Amendment presents all the claims directed to a single invention. If, however, it is determined that the claims are not directed to a single invention, applicant hereby agrees to elect without traverse as a prerequisite to the granting of special status.

An international search has been made in the Japanese Patent Office in International Application PCT/JP2003/011679 which is the foreign priority application of the present application and thereby meets the requirements for accelerated examination.

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(1) Disclosure of Prior Art

The International Search Report issued by the ISA cited the following:

Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application 2000-57746;
Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application H11-161663;
Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application H10-327381;
Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application 2003-249057;
Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application 2003-23604; and
Japanese Laid-open Patent Application H11-191282.

The invention of Claim 48 of the present application (hereinafter, referred to as the “present invention”) includes the following:

“A recording medium having video data, a plurality of programs, and a table recorded thereon, wherein

each of the plurality of programs shows a playback control procedure of the video data, the table includes (1) identification information of each of the plurality of programs, and (2) information showing that each of the plurality of programs belongs to one of a movie mode and an enhanced mode,

one of the plurality of programs includes a command for branching, and the branching command specifies a branch destination using indirect referencing via the table.”

Regarding the recording medium, the table shows in which mode each program should be executed, and it is, therefore, possible to easily make the playback device execute a branching procedure involving mode switching where branching to another program is performed after the mode being switched. In the case where an execution body of scenarios in the movie mode is an interpreter for interpreting commands, and an execution body of scenarios in the enhanced mode is a Java Virtual Machine that interprets methods in an object-oriented language, it is possible to

cause the playback device to perform the program provision by making the playback device refer to the mode-indicating information in the table, and selectively starting one of the execution bodies.

The video data recorded on the recording medium is played on either a screen for playing normal movies or a screen for the Java Virtual Machine and the browser. Such screen switching allows for unprecedented and innovative virtual effects. In terms of branching from the movie mode to the enhanced mode, a branch destination is specified by indirect referencing via the table. By designing descriptive contents of the table, it is possible to realize operations for changing branch destinations between when the record medium is loaded on a playback device having a Java Virtual Machine and a browser and when it is loaded on a playback device not having those applications. As a result of the change in branch destinations, it is possible to close a path for branching to a program in the enhanced mode when the record medium is loaded on a playback device having no Java Virtual Machine and browser, which results in assuring that operations can be carried out on any type of playback devices.

In addition, such branching is achieved by branch commands conventionally used in DVD playback devices. Accordingly, it is possible to efficiently transport branching commands created for DVDs to such playback devices as described above.

Note the prior art documents considered herein are those asserted to deny novelty and an inventive step of the present invention.

Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application 2000-57746 discloses a technology for recording the shared information 2001 playable on predetermined information playback devices, recording the specific information 2002 playable on specific information playback devices among the predetermined information playback devices, and recording, on a recording medium, the link

information 2003 that indicates the relationship between the shared information and specific information. The present invention has a plurality of information pieces whose execution bodies are different and are recorded on a recording medium, in association with each other. However, what the 57746 reference describes is information indicating a relationship between the shared information and the specific information, not a command for branching from one program to another. Even if link information is assumed to be a table, it does not include an idea of specifying a branch destination using an indirect reference via the table. This reference cannot, therefore, serve as the basis for denying the novelty of the present invention. The 57746 reference only discloses differentiating and establishing uniqueness of functions with respect to individual information recording playback devices produced by different manufactures, or sold by different distributors, and does not include any information stating which program should be run on which execution body. In addition, the reference does not include any description which would assist a person skilled in the art on the technical matters described above.

Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application H11-161663 discloses a URL incorporated into a navigation packet of a Video Object Unit. When the web button on the remote controller is hit during playback of DVD-Video, the URL is sent to the WWW browser 117 as an Internet address desired to be displayed and HTML contents corresponding to the URL are obtained from an external server and displayed on the screen. The 161663 reference describes providing a navigation packet with a URL, and not a command for branching from one program to another and displaying HTML contents on one execution body, and does not include any information for switching among multiple execution bodies to perform operations.

Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application. H10-327381 discloses examining the conditions of a DVD reading device 104 and other components via a control bus and directing

predetermined operations to them by causing the control processor 101 of the video playback device 100 to implement machine instructions for the control processor that are stored in the read-only memory 103 and the main memory 102. The 327381 reference describes performing a control operation by making a processor of a reading device implement machine instructions, and not a command for branching from a program to another. This may expand a playback function in allowing for recording and playing video information as well as highly customized textual information, but does not include any description helping one skilled in the art come up with the present claimed invention.

The invention of Claim 49 of the present application adds further technical matters shown below.

“In the table, a title number is assigned to each pair of (1) the identification information and (2) the information, and

the indirect referencing is to specify a program of the branch destination, using the title numbers.”

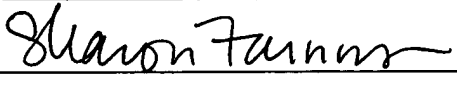
Application signaling, i.e., operation control of application programs in response to a switch in service, has been introduced into receiving apparatuses for the European digital broadcasting (DVB-MHP). By adding the technical matters described above, the recording medium of the present invention is capable of making the playback device perform application signaling in response to a switch in the titles. By making the playback device perform application signaling in a similar manner that the European-digital-broadcasting receiving apparatuses do, resources can be retrieved from an application each time when playback of a title in the playback device is finished. Thus, application operations similar to those performed on the European-digital-broadcasting receiving apparatuses can be also assured in the playback

device of the recording medium. In addition, the "title" is a unit of playback which was introduced in the time of DVD playback devices, and is able to perform application signaling on, for example, DVD playback devices to be introduced in the near future in a similar manner that the European-digital-broadcasting receiving apparatuses do. Herewith, it is possible to efficiently transport applications used in the European-digital-broadcasting receiving apparatuses to DVD playback devices. Our invention designed to achieve such effects is of high technological value, and should be protected by promptly granting a patent.

Consequently, we request Accelerated Examination for the present invention in pursuit of early grant of a patent.

If there are any questions, the undersigned attorney can be reached at the phone number listed below.


I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on March 23, 2006.

By: Sharon Farnus

Signature

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Very truly yours,

SNELL & WILMER L.L.P.



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